

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

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1. (Currently Amended) A method for managing the changing of a network infrastructure, comprising:

opening a change ticket that includes creating a change plan that comprises having  
instructions about how a change is to be performed;

associating said change plan ticket with one of a plurality of change categories  
corresponding to a type of change that is described in the change plan;

providing said change plan ticket to affected entities for approval; and  
implementing said change plan after approval of the change ticket has been provided by  
the affected entities;

wherein said responsible entities are selected based on, and said change plan ticket is  
approved in accordance with, rules related to each of said change categories into which said  
change plan ticket was associated.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said affected entities are unknown to at least one  
other entity involved in said method.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said change plan ticket is accessible by  
a work-flow engine.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said work-flow engine is implemented through use of a computer system.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said affected entities comprise one of a customer, a duty manager, a change coordinator, a change approver, and an operations center.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 ~~whereby~~ wherein said change categories include one of scheduled change, unscheduled change, and event response.

8. (Currently Amended) A system for managing the changing of a network infrastructure, comprising:

a work-flow engine;

a change ticket comprising a change plan including instructions about how a change is to be performed, said change ticket being present in a form that can be used by said work-flow engine; and

responsible entities connected to said work-flow engine whose approval of the change ticket is required before said change plan can be implemented;

~~Wherein~~ wherein, said change ~~plan~~ ticket is organized into one of a plurality of change categories based on the nature of said change, and said work-flow engine provides said change ticket to said responsible entities for approval.

9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein said work-flow engine comprises a computer system.

10. (Original) A method for managing the changing a network infrastructure, comprising  
a change author having the duties of proposing a proposed change and authoring a change ticket;

a change sponsor having the duties of seeking all necessary approval for said proposed change;

a change coordinator who has the duties of coordinating and carrying out the proposed change and;

an operations center who has the duties related to the monitoring of said network;

wherein said change author authors said change ticket to include a change plan for implementing said proposed change, said change ticket being passed to said change sponsor when said change author has completed all their said duties said change sponsor passing said change ticket to said change coordinator when said change sponsor has completed all their said duties and said change coordinator passing on said change ticket to said operations center when said change coordinator has completed all their said duties, said operations center being responsible for closing said change ticket.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10 ~~whereby~~ wherein said change ticket is a computer construct which can be passed through electronic means.

12. (Currently Amended) A means for managing the changing of the infrastructure of a network comprising:

authoring means for generating a change ticket having ~~creating~~ a change plan that ~~comprises~~ includes instructions about how a change is to be performed;

change matrix means for associating said change with one of a plurality of change categories;

communication means for providing said change ~~plan~~ ticket to affected entities for approval; and

agent means for implementing said change plan after said approval of the change ticket has been provided;

Applicant : Majid Mir  
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~~Whereby~~ wherein said responsible entities are selected based on, and said change ~~plan~~  
ticket is approved in accordance with, rules related to said change category into which said  
change was associated.

